

Story #409 (Tape #4, 1972)

Narrator: Necmi Okur, 20

Location: Narlı Kuyu, Silifke, İcel,  
was place at which tale  
was taped; narrator was  
from another village, that  
of Ark Arası

Date: October 13, 1972

The Unswervable Boulder of Karakaya<sup>1</sup>

Above this village [which is in the valley of the Göksu] there was a huge boulder, balanced so precariously that it was a constant threat to the lives of all who lived there. The villagers wondered how they might get rid of this boulder. A man "with a pointed brain" [that is, ingenious] spoke up and said, "Some of us will push the rock and start it rolling down the hill. Others will take a black tent—they had large goat-hair tents—and, holding it up before the rock, entice it aside and lead it away from the village."<sup>2</sup>

They decided to apply this method to their problem. Most of the men went up the hill to push the rock loose, while five or six held up the big tent before it. They started the boulder rolling down the slope, and those with the black tent tried to frighten it aside. But the boulder

<sup>1</sup>The name of the village, Karakaya, means black rock, and so this anecdote has some of the quality of a local legend.

<sup>2</sup>Most readers will identify the tent with the cape of a bull-fighter. Quite apart from the bull ring, however, animals have from time immemorial been diverted by objects waved before them.

paid no attention, rolling straight down the hill and killing a number of people.